22 /366/ Natural conditions have an overwhelming effect in shaping and determining the form of the material culture of the Yamana. This is equally true of the neighboring Selk'nam /Ona/ (Vol. I, 192). Since the indispensable conditions for gardening and farming, as well as for animal husbandry, are lacking, they can only be simple gatherers or hunters with a nonsedentary way of life. They practice the nomadism of a people at home on the water and along the shores. Less than fishermen, more than hunters or gatherers, they are engaged in obtaining food and are, therefore, appropriately referred to as "water nomads." Almost all day long they travel in their canoes along the intricate water channels or hunt on the shore. When they are not doing that, they squat in the hut, which is always erected on the shore near the water line. Only occasionally and for special purposes do they leave the shore and push inland to the center of the island. The surface of the water and the narrow strip of coast are the field of action and the sphere of life for the Yamana. Whatever they encounter here in the form of plants and animals determines their economic activity and is indispensable for their standard of living. The large sea mammals, the indigenous species of seals and whales, play the most important role. Sea otters and sea birds are no less important. Finally, from among the lower animals, nothing could rival the mussels and large crabs. Hunting and gathering these things constitute the chief part of the economic activity of the Yamana. The vegetable kingdom offers practically nothing, hence our natives rely exclusively on a meat diet.

422 The vegetable kingdom and the products of the hunt furnish the raw materials for their property in goods. As a matter of principle, these possessions are of such a nature that they not only do not impede unrestricted wandering, but assure the acquisition of everything needed for subsistence and, above all, facilitate hunting and gathering. All their property is limited to what is absolutely essential. As such, this is so little that a demanding, civilized human being marvels at such perfected self-sufficiency. This is a result of the fact that every item beyond the limit of what is indispensable would be a burden that would become more grievously oppressive the longer one carried it around.

342 Preparedness for uninterrupted movement precludes fixed dwellings from the outset, either in the form of individual establishments or community settlements. A loose, carelessly constructed hut served as shelter for a night or for a few days.

1: Guinée--216 E-5 (1918-1924) 1937 5098 Tahgan 5098

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/512 cont./

exclusively confined to the women" /translated from French/. The word "fishing" here means the gathering and catching of small sea animals.

This division of labor is an ancient law of custom. This is true no less of the planned way in which both sexes carry on their activities, which goes back to the very beginnings of this ethnic group.

•22 178 It can be proved that the customary methods of hunting have been handed down unchanged from father to son; they guarantee sure success with little effort. The indigenous animals have also /513/ retained their habits and the hunter is dependent upon these if he wishes to attain his booty. With the exception of the guanaco which appears in only a small section of the Yamana country, the Indian stalks only the inhabitants of the sea, which is the reason why he cannot do without his canoe. Hence the latter is a vital method of transportation for him.

His wishes, however, are not directed toward anything and everything that the unfathomable sea contains. He consciously makes some selection among the animals, no matter how little freedom he has to begin with and how limited, after all, the number of useful animal species is. This applies even more to the gathering activity of the woman. Mother Nature is very stingy with the products of the vegetable kingdom, that man can use for food down there on the border of habitable territory. The lower animals are abundantly represented. They provide a considerable addition to subsistence, and gathering them is a constant, convenient occupation of the woman (230). How she goes about it and

230. Bridges (e):331 comments in general on their means of obtaining food. Bove (e):157 says: "The sea furnishes the staples of their diet in the form of fish, mussels, crabs, seals, and aquatic birds; furthermore, in the summer they find about 20 varieties of edible mushrooms in the woods and a few edible grasses." Compare Bove (g):234.

1: Gusinde--217 E-6 (1918-1924) 1937 1088 Tafgan 1088

/313 cont./
According to Lovisato (b) 129 the Yamana are "fishermen and only sometimes hunters along the coast" /translated from Italian/.

the resources she employs are the heritage of the acquired wisdom of many past generations.

Now we understand why the customary procedure in hunting and gathering is retained unchanged even by the few remaining Yamana. The ancient methods and manipulations automatically recommend themselves by their almost unsurpassable appropriateness. This is reason enough why the representatives of this tribe cling to their valuable heritage with unyielding tenacity. The basis of Yamana economic life -- primarily the occupation of hunting by the man, together with a considerable contribution from gathering by the woman -- was forced upon them, so to speak, by their environment. This particular type of food quest forces each individual family to a restless nomadic life.

In these fundamental respects the Yamana are similar to their northeastern neighbors, but they also enjoy noteworthy advantages besides. Whereas the northern Selk'nam are dependent on the cururo (Vol. I, 277) and the southern Selk'nam on the guanaco, the Yamana men have such a limited variety of animals to hunt in all parts of their country that they are never dependent on a single species. Fortunately, the Yamana woman, too, has a greater selection in her gathering than does her Selk'nam neighbor. The latter has only a few mushrooms and fish, while the former in addition has easy access to masses of the almost indispensable mussels and crabs. All this simplifies the food quest and improves the way of life of the Yamana not inconsiderably as compared to their neighbors.

/314/ 1. Seal Hunting

Without doubt seals provided the chief contribution to Yamana subsistence at all times and in all sections of the country. Formerly several species lived in herds on the many islands and rocks, places of wreckage, and coasts of the Cape Horn Archipelago. Even the giants of this species, the bear seal, tépa (Arctocephalus

/527 cont./

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23/ to the superior number and the rage of his opponents. After the Indian has skinned the fox, he tosses the entire body to his dogs; he very decidedly scorns this meat.

22 Among the few species of mammals on the Cape Horn Archipelago, seals occupy first place in the food quest of the Yamana. /528/ They are hunted not only because of their meat, but because their skins are urgently needed. The very desirable whale is primarily regarded as an occasional present that provides for many families over a long period. In comparison the guanaco is much less important because it is locally confined, and the otter actually furnishes only its skin. Tracking down a fox is a matter for the dogs. The many bird species that the Indian hunts could hardly be dispensed with in his household. Sometimes he is wholly dependent on them alone.

5. The Woman in the Food Quest

92 Among the Yamana, man and wife form an economic cooperative, and it is especially in the matter of obtaining food that they are dependent on one another. The woman, of course, does not take an active part in the hunt, which is regarded as a vital duty of the men, but she sometimes helps him indirectly by means of absolutely necessary knacks. She, as mistress of the canoe, takes him to those places where he wants to try his luck and go after game. She shares with him the difficulties of perilous crossings and long watches through the hours of the night when he devotes himself to catching birds. Finally, she brings him, along with his booty, to a safe place where both of them can enjoy a well-earned rest after all their trouble and exertions.

Far beyond the limited participation of the man in procuring food, she makes a considerable, altogether independent contribution to the support of her family by means of an activity that she alone can carry on. This is gathering, for which she is equipped by nature and to which she can devote herself without jeopardizing her more important duties as mother and wife. This activity is actually an important supplement to her husband's hunting activities. It is her duty to bring in lower animals and vegetable products.

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147 153 The Yamana is proudly aware of his own superiority. Along /559/ with his astonishing agility, he has developed his physical strength, and time and again on the hunt he has opportunities to develop and increase it (308). Thus he overcomes all difficulties

308. Bridges agrees with this unreservedly: "These people certainly show the greatest fortitude, endurance, and energy in following at their hunting" /cited in English/ (MM:XII, 12;1878).

and impediments in the way of his goals. He does not grow tired of hunting his prey and of fighting the hostile forces of nature, but each morning he devotes himself with fresh courage and renewed confidence of victory to his difficult daily task. Hence to struggle with his environment and to wrest from it the animals he needs for his sustenance is for every man a daily necessity, in part a desired one (309). It is not easy for him, but his well-

309. Hyades (f):567 has grasped this mental attitude of these children of nature in the following words: "The Fuegians, in fact, consider the hunt a pleasure as well as a necessity /translated from French/. He has really described the situation very well.

developed mental powers, his extraordinarily practiced senses, his great skill, and his personal assurance in the control of his tools and implements guarantee him success.

• 22 His mental agility effortlessly and intuitively senses the opportunities for the hunt and the general demands of every season. He never shows discontent with the rigors of winter, which impede his free movement on land, nor with the incalculable changes of weather in summer, which only too often lead his light canoe into danger on the water. During one half of the year he patiently does without the things that the other half will again offer him. He attentively follows the change which each

/560 cont./

22 At this time also the seals guard their newly born young on the beach and are easy to get at (p. 30 /untranslated/).

The gathering activity of the woman is somewhat more dependent on the various seasons. This, obviously, applies first of all to the hunt for berries which ripen in late summer and in the fall. Cyttaria harioti can be picked in the fall and in the first half of winter. With the beginning of summer Cyttaria darwinii are also matured and remain on the trees until shortly before the end of winter. The cold season is not suitable for fishing with a line (313). On the other hand, sea urchins (Echinodermum) taste

313. Bridges (j):25 referred to "many kinds of smaller yet valuable fish, chiefly plentiful through summer and autumn and early winter"/cited in English/. Hyades (q):339 also confirms this. See footnote 296.

best in July and August, that is, toward the end of winter. In the spring girls and women busily hunt for birds' eggs as long as the opportunity lasts. They rejoice when the terrors of winter are past and the providing of food is made easier for them by the warmer season.

221 262 The variety that the Yamana family can count on in obtaining food is limited in these few details. Their safest supplementary source throughout the entire year is the inexhaustible amount of Mytilus mussels. All Indian women can successfully dip into this source when there is no other prospect. Despite all this, the family is not spared a few days of hunger if in some spot even the supply of mussels is exhausted and they cannot proceed elsewhere because of bad weather. As we have said, mussels have the same importance for the Yamana as bread has for Europeans, and they tire of them just as little as Europeans do of bread. Finally, we should like to remind the reader that the individual periods of the whole year are determined according to the various stages of development of Cyttaria darwinii. This does not mean, however, that this fungus contributes to any extent to the diet of our Indians (p. 277). Despite the very slight variations, the monotony of a meat diet exclusively continues all during the year.